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**Delaware River Oil Spill
Joint Information Center**

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Press Release

**DELAWARE RIVER OIL SPILL UPDATE #21
AND THIRD PARTY CLAIMS PROCESS FOR ATHOS I OIL SPILL CLAIMS CHANGING**

PHILADELPHIA – The claims process for uncompensated damages and removal costs related to the discharge of oil from the tank vessel Athos I into the Delaware River near Paulsboro, N.J., on Nov. 26, 2004, will now be handled by the National Pollution Funds Center.

The owners/insurers of the vessel have already incurred cleanup costs over \$100 million, well beyond their financial obligations under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. As a result, they have requested that third party claims now be referred to the funds center for payment through the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, which was established in 1990 to help facilitate cleanup activities and compensate for damages from oil spills. The vessel owners/insurers intend to continue funding the cleanup costs at this time.

"From the moment our vessel struck the uncharted object obstructing the anchorage we have been thrown into a ship owner's worst nightmare. But throughout the dark night we have been assisted by some talented and hard working people," said Harry T. Hajimichael, General Manager, Tsakos Shipping And Trading SA, managers of the tank vessel Athos I. "The Captain of the Port and the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard, members of the State response forces, animal rescue specialists, our crew and our own contractor response team have labored diligently since the incident occurred. We have met our responsibilities and more, and remain committed to supporting the enormous response efforts of so many people along such a beautiful waterway. We want to thank all who have had a hand in the response. We hope that the lesson of our misfortune will be funding for safer channels not just in the United States, but the world over."

With about 400 responders working in the command center and along the affected shoreline, clean up efforts are continuing. Approximately 117,750 gallons of oil and oily liquid and 12,068 tons of oily solids have been recovered. 38 facilities along with 78 percent of the heavily oiled areas, 54 percent of the medium oiled areas, and 34 percent of the lightly oiled areas have been decontaminated.

Funds center personnel will provide a claims presentation on February 22 at 4 p.m. and again at 5:30 p.m. at the Independence Seaport Museum at Penn's Landing in Philadelphia. Claimants are invited to attend either presentation. A claims workshop will also be held on the evening of March 8. All handouts and information provided at the workshops will be posted on the funds center website, <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/npfc/index.htm>.

Claims that have been received so far will be denied by the responsible party and returned to the claimants. Claimants should resubmit their claims to the National Pollution Funds Center.

Claims should be mailed to:

National Pollution Funds Center (ca)

ATTN: Claims - FPN P05005
4200 Wilson Blvd. Suite 1000
Arlington, VA 22203-1804

The center will accept and adjudicate for uncompensated damages and removal costs resulting from the oil spill. Damages may include: damage to natural resources; damage to, or loss of, real or personal property; loss of subsistence use of a natural resource; loss of government revenue; loss of profits or earning capacity; and increased cost of public services.

Generally, the requirements for presenting a claim are as follows: provide all evidence documenting the damages; submit the claim in writing; include the dollar amount you are claiming and put your signature in ink.

Specific requirements for submitting a claim, including optional claims forms to assist people in submitting a claim can be obtained on line at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/npsc/claims.htm>, or by calling (800) 280-7118. Specific requirements for presenting claims may also be found in the Federal Register (57 FR 36314) published August 12, 1992. Normal business hours for center are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

Due to the magnitude of this spill and the number and types of claims expected, claimants are asked to be patient as there are a limited number of personnel available for resolving claims throughout the country.

For more information about how to file a claim or about the times and locations of the claims workshops, please visit <http://www.incidentinfo.com>.

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